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LEITH HILL,

A POEM.

Περὶ παντὸς τ᾽ην ἐλευθερίαν.

SELDEN.

——— Let the claſſic page thy fancy lead
Thro' rural ſcenes, ———————
Or catch thyſelf the landſcape gliding ſwift
Athwart Imagination's vivid eye.

THOMPSON.

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M DCC LXXXIX.

BRITISH MUSEUM

LEITH HILL is ſituated in the Vicinity of Dorking, in the County of Surrey, and commands the moſt extenſive Proſpect in England; perhaps in Europe.

LEITH HILL.

LET others bend their ſteps to foreign climes,
From Alpine hill, or lofty Appenine,
Feaſt on the grandeur of the Latian Plains;
While I, perhaps, ſurpaſſing grandeur court;
Scenes, which my native iſle profuſely yields,
At once the theme and glory of my ſong.

Ye, whom the beauteous and ſublime delight,
The expanſive proſpect, leading forth the view
Till all the diſtant landſcape fades away,
And form, and ſhade, are loſt in fleeting air;

Aſcend the brow of ſolitary LEITH,
Whoſe ample ſummit ſtretching many a rood,
Pillows the lowering clouds. There gaze your fill.

From the ſmooth platform of a mould'ring tower*,
The tomb of worth, and mark of taſte refin'd,
Which ſtands a faithful and conſpicuous guide
To that judicious, central point of ſight,
Where beſt encircling proſpects meet the eye;
Contemplate firſt the mighty view beneath.

Fields beyond fields, in vaſt ſucceſſion, ſpread
Their cultur'd ſurfaces; and in all forms
The lively hedge-rows bound their wide domains,
With various vegetable wealth o'er grown.
The clover's fragrant light empurpled bloom,
Or yellowy brightneſs of the ripening corn;

* The Monument.

The

The umber'd tincture of the buſhy heath,
With other hues immingling, tint the ground,
And gaily clothe the many-colour'd ſcene.
Ariſing here, and there, ſmooth gentle hills,
Emboſs the plain, and tufted woods immix,
Enſhade, enrich, and beautify the whole.
O'er all, the pow'r of animation reigns,
Gladd'ning the land, with life and rural joy.
Thro' verdant paſtures ſtalk the lowing herds,
And fleecy wand'rers climb the mountain brow.
Scatter'd the cultivated grounds among,
The abodes of agriculture, greet the view;
And cluſt'ring village tops, and ſpiry towns,
Delight the eye, and raiſe the ſocial thought.
Such is the ſcene, till ſlow convexing earth
Steals from the enquiring ſight, the diſtant fields,
And thick'ning foliage fills the leſs'ning plain:
Then fades the landſcape, or rough hills aſcend.

Uſeful your toil, reſpectable your taſk,
Ye worthy Britons, born to guide the plough;
T' impregnate earth with vegetable ſtores,
And reap the great ſuſtaining props of life.
Monarchs of old your rural labours ſhar'd;
Patriots and heroes turn'd the ſtubborn glebe.
In later times, where Phœbus darts his beams
On Aſia's plains, rip'ning the fruitful ſoil,
In annual pomp, the ſov'reign graſp'd the plough,
And the firſt leſſon to his ſubjects gave.
What gen'rous minds, but love the frequent farm,
Conſcious that public, ſprings from private good:
Such, joyful view the land with furrows ſeam'd,
The thriving ſtock from year to year increaſe,
And well-earn'd plenty ſmooth the brow of care.
When chilling penury flies the rural home,
With all that heaps the oppreſſive load of life;
How light the labour, and how blithe the heart.

The patriot meditates the future good.
Redundant harveſts, well-fill'd granaries,
A race robuſt and bold, of toil-ſtrung nerve;
In peace their country's pride, in war its ſtrength.

Reſume, my muſe, the yet-unfiniſh'd theme,
In numbers wild, and ſuited to the ſcene;
Paint the rude mountains that enſkirt the plain,
And lift their ſummits to the miſty clouds.
Weſtward the lofty rampart bends its courſe,
Checking the raging blaſts, whoſe forceful ſtrength
With hoary foam o'erſpreads the boiling deep,
And wreck their fury on the whirling ſands;
Forbade to drive the torrent o'er the vale.
When Phœbus ſhoots his penetrative beams,
Thro' the dull night of fog that clouds the ſky,
And the clear'd azure yields tranſparent light;

The keen eye glancing thro' diſparted hills*,
Beholds old Ocean ſpreading forth his arms,
Embracing this, his firſt and fav'rite iſle.
Then follows ſwift the mind-created view;
Reflection wanders o'er the liquid plain,
And from each quarter, ſees the urging gales
Succeſſive ſpeed ſome veſſel to our ſhores,
Concentrating the wealth of various climes.
As when the gen'rous maſtives walk abroad,
Alert and watchful, by the ſhepherd led
Around the harmleſs flocks, protecting them
Againſt the onſets of the prowling wolf;
The floating bulwarks hover near a fleet
Deep-laden, helpleſs, unprepar'd for war,
And guard it ſafely to its deſtin'd port.
Nor this alone their care;—arm'd for the fight,
In ſtrength and numbers bold, eager they ſeek

* Shoreham Gap.

The oft eluding foe, and court the war.
Direful the conteſt when in battle ranged,
Redoubling peals of thunder ſpeak their rage.
Fierce as th' avenging bolts of mighty Jove,
Swift meſſengers of death, the bullets fly,
And load the Gallic decks with ſlaughter'd heaps.
Thro' many a yawning chaſm the life-blood ſtreams,
Purpling the azure waves with human gore;
Or in one pond'rous blaſt the iron ſtorm
Flies thund'ring, craſhing thro' the ſhatter'd ſhip,
And preſs'd beneath accumulating waves,
She ſinks for ever, in the vaſt abyſs.
Such, are Britannia's triumphs o'er her foes;
Thus, ſhe aſſerts her empire o'er the deep.

Now invitation bids the roving muſe
New ſcenes explore; bids her yon hill* aſcend,

* Box Hill.

Thick

Thick ſhaded with the tree, whoſe vocal wood
Breathes gentle ſounds, that melt th' impaſſion'd ſoul,
Or ſweetly plaintive, draw the tender ſigh.
Say, my Amanda, thither ſhall we ſtray
Thro' winding ſhades, or ſeek the opening view
While love ſheds beauties o'er the beauteous ſcene.
Where wilt thou lead? But wherefore ſhould I aſk,
Since joy attends where'er thy footſteps tread,
And nature gladdens at thy lov'd approach,
As if, like me, enamour'd of thy charms.
Then if thou wilt, to the ſteep mountain verge,
Stupendous wall of earth! from whoſe high creſt
The trees which deck the verdant vale beneath
Seem but as ſhrubs; the charming cottages
That ſeek the ſhelter of the neighb'ring groves,
Appear the dwellings of ſome pigmy race,
Or buildings rear'd by ſportive infancy.
Yonder the Mole winds gently thro' the mead,

Then mines the earth, and ſteals along unſeen,
Till tir'd of darkneſs, forth again he burſts,
And pours anew his clear and copious ſtream.
Behold yon grove that ſkirts his graſſy bank,
How cloſe and thick it twines its branching arms,
Defying ev'n the piercing mid-day ſun.
Hail ye calm, ſecret fairy-woven bow'rs,
The ſeats of fancy, and the Muſes' haunt!
Emboſom'd in your deep ſequeſter'd ſhades,
The ſoul collects, invigorates her pow'rs,
Attunes the deathleſs ſong, ſpurns the low earth,
And wings her flight beyond the reach of Fate.

But not the peaceful vale with all its ſweets,
The embow'ring grove, or cool tranſlucent ſtream,
The lofty mountain, or expanded plain,
Variety profuſe, luxuriant change,
Could charm the woes of ſad Britannicus.

Thither retiring from ten thouſand ills,
His hapleſs fortune met ten thouſand more.
Awhile yon lowly cot the victim held,
Not ſhelter'd; for his eager foes ruſh'd in,
Gaunt, heart conſuming, life devouring fiends,
Corroding grief, keen hunger, raging thirſt,
With all their ſad variety of pain.
Yet unſubdued he combated them all,
And fearleſs turn'd aſide approaching death.
Where were ye then, ye fly, ſlow fraudful train,
Who only fawn'd and flatter'd to betray,
Ye foes diſguis'd in friendſhip's ſacred form?
But ev'n thoſe fiends, were friends compar'd with you;
They flatter'd not, nor maſk'd their fell attack
Beneath the ſemblance bright of generous deeds,
Of actions kind, of ſentiments ſincere.
But ye are known, deteſted, and deſpiſed;
And were ye not, what hinge of adamant,

What

What bar of ſteel, what ſev'n fold gate of braſs
Could ſhut out truth, and hide ye from yourſelves?

But haſte my muſe, by other themes inſpir'd,
To yonder tree-crown'd hill, the ſeat of taſte*,
Of attic elegance, of worth, and Locke;
Patron and judge of ev'ry finer art,
Delighting in the pride of ancient Greece,
Which emulative Britain makes her own.
Glorious that ſkill, which from miſhapen forms,
Rough, uncouth maſſes from the quarry hewn,
Brings out proportion, beauty, almoſt life.
How gradual beneath the artiſt's hand
Accumulating fragments ſtrew the ground,
Till diſencumber'd from the rugged heap,
In nature's pride, all beauteous, unarray'd,
The charming goddeſs ſtands inſpiring love,

* Norbury Park.

While we, Pygmalion-like, enraptur'd gaze,
And fain would animate the perfect form.
Worthy of fame, tranſcendant is the art,
That breaks the ſtubborn marble to its will,
And bids it wear the bright, the hallow'd forms
Of ſages, patriots, heroes, god-like men,
Whom Virtue conſecrates, and calls her own.
From age to age, the great examples ſtand,
And late poſterity admire and praiſe.
No leſs the ſiſter art adorns thy walls;
The pencil true to Nature's faireſt works,
Pourtrays her ev'ry grace, entints the ſcene,
And bids the canvas glow with ſeeming life.
Can we, unprais'd, obſerve the taſte refin'd,
That on each ſpot its ſuited produce rears,
And makes the effect of Art ſeem Nature's choice?
Pleaſing the mixture of the leafy tribes;
Tree, ſhrub, and plant, immingling various hues

Of ſilv'ry brightneſs, lively verdure, duſky ſhade;
Each heightens each, by ſkilful contraſt mix'd,
And tow'ring high o'er all, the loftier claſs
Pre-eminent of ſtature, lift their heads,
And while they ſcarce ſalute the paſſing breeze,
Add grandeur to the well-aſſembled group.

Ariſing from the ſkirt of yonder vale,
Of favour'd aſpect, Denbigh's mount appears:
Beneath, the hill-encircled Dorking lies,
Surrounded by a glut of rural pomp.
As the ſlow footſtep gains the bold aſcent,
Wider and wider grows the ſplendid view;
'Till from its ſummit, o'er confronting hills
Beyond, a plain immenſe burſts on the ſight,
And with magnificence unthought of, fills the ſcene.
Here, lovely nature ſeems a while to have paus'd,
And ſcatter'd fragrance with unſparing hand.

Attracted by the vegetable ſweets,
The fleecy tribes o'erſpread the mountain-brow,
Securely ſtray, and crop their thymy food.

Amid thy ſhades the muſe delighted roves,
Or wanders o'er thy rural eminence*;
Thine, Howard, where the roſe-lipp'd goddeſs dwells,
And cheers thy noble heart with her beſt ſmiles.
May I too court her balmy breathing pow'r,
And while the gentle zephyrs round me play,
Inhale the breezy incenſe of the ſpring.
Hygea, ever blooming, ever young,
Fluſh'd with the new-born graces of the year,
Thou lead'ſt the gaily-circling hours along
A ſmiling, ſocial, joy-inſpiring train.
Rejoicing nature hails your lov'd approach,
And as you trip along in bright array,

* Cotman Dean—A Seat of his Grace the Duke of Norfolk.

Each bloſſom opens, and each flow'ret blooms.
While thus ye hand in hand purſue the dance,
Reſponſive to your ſteps the feather'd choir
Attune their various ſtrains, harmonious join,
And warble forth the concert of the groves.
In what fair form, ſay goddeſs, ſhall we trace
Thy bright reſemblance next; where ſeek thy pow'r?
Too great the danger, ſhou'd we view thy charms
Full glowing in Belinda's roſeate cheek;
For there we meet the love-inſpiring look,
That ſteals the ſoul and kindles ſoft deſire.
More ſafe to eye thee in maturer life,
When age obtains of thee a ſecond ſpring.

While thus we careleſs range o'er hill and dale,
And like the bee ſip ſweets from ev'ry flower,
Forget we not the dignity of verſe.
Fill'd with the inſpiring god, the bards of old,

Smote the deep lyre, and rais'd the lofty ſong.
Bard of eternity! for ſuch he ſeems,
The ſhame and glory of ungrateful Greece;
Immortal Homer * led the daring ſtrain.
Of boundleſs mind, he pierc'd thro' nature's veil,
And like the light that on creation dawn'd,
Shew'd order, wiſdom, foreſight, deep deſign;
Then ſhed o'er all the noon-tide blaze of day.
Tho' 'tis not ours to build the epic verſe,
Fabric divine, for after-ages rear'd,
The indulgent muſe permits no faint eſſay;
Her touches thro' the vivid landſcape glow,
And deigning higher aid, exalt the page
With native virtues, elegance, and worth.
Thus favour'd, we purſue the pleaſing taſk
By truth preſented, and by worth inſpir'd.

* Homer is related to have gained a precarious ſubſiſtence by repeating his own verſes; although after his deceaſe, ſeven cities conteſted the honour of his birth.

Ennobled

Ennobled by the firſt of virtues, public zeal;
Thy title, Norfolk, dignifies the ſong.
That ſteady flame which burns the patriot breaſt,
In thee, with unabated fervour glows,
And ranks thee foremoſt of thy country's friends.

When the recording ſpirit late inſcrib'd
In Heaven's eternal regiſtry of things,
The ſoul-dethroning ſhock a monarch felt;
That chaos of the mind, that death in life,
Britannia thro' her fartheſt realms deplor'd;
Angelic tears defac'd the mournful page,
And from the tablet of remembrance waſh'd
The tale. Yet while hiſtoric annals live,
Thou ſhalt be nam'd with that firm patriot band,
At once protectors of the regal rights,
And guardians of that ſyſtem equi-pois'd
By juſt and freely repreſented pow'rs,

The legiſlative wonder of the world.
'Twas then thy virtues, Prince *, Britannia's hope,
Like pureſt gold when tried in torturing flame,
Came forth unalter'd from encircling fires;
Bright, undiminiſh'd, as before the aſſay.
Mindful of all that binds a noble ſoul,
Each public duty, and each private tie;
From ſhore to ſhore, ſhall Fame reſound thy praiſe,
Thy mild forbearance, and thy filial worth,
Enthroning thee in ev'ry loyal heart.

In Princely virtue, as in birth, allied,
To grace the ſenate, and to lead the field,
By Nature form'd illuſtrious York appears,
In whom the Genius † of war revives;
Perhaps for future victories deſign'd,
As yet in Fate's myſterious volume hid.

* His Royal Highneſs George Prince of Wales. † Frederic the Great of Pruſſia.

Unſullied

Unſullied patriotiſm claims the verſe,
Taught to reſpect Hibernia's generous ſons;
Who ſoaring far above the arts of ſtate,
Decided*, loyal, manly, firm and great,
Crown'd their allegiance with a nation's love.

Emplum'd for flight the Muſe expands her wing,
Tow'ring explores the many-featur'd ſcene,
Till nought of excellence remain unſung.
Dull and incurious would ſhe deem the man,
Who could ſurvey the mix'd, the various view,
Within the vaſty circle thrown around,
Encompaſſing the prime of England's wealth,
And not demand what fills th' extenſive ſpace;
What lands connecting form the mighty whole.
Around the lofty LEITH, Suthrea † ſpreads

* Alluding to the Delegation from Ireland, requeſting His Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales to accept the Regency of that Kingdom, during the deplorable and much-lamented Affliction of His Majeſty.

† The ancient Saxon name of Surrey.

Her hills, her vales, her woods, and flow'ry meads;
Each ſmiling ſcene that greets the nearer view.
Thrice happy ſoil, which boaſts the nobleſt tree
That ever flouriſh'd 'neath the cope of Heav'n.
Here ſprang the vigorous ſtem, that branching wide,
The growth of ages ſtretch'd its mighty arms
O'er Britain's Iſle, now free'ſt of the free.
Fair were its bloſſoms, fairer are its fruits
Than thoſe of fabled Heſperides, dragon-watch'd.
Guard them, ye Britons, with unceaſing care,
The fruits that from your Magna * Charta ſpring.

The woody Suſſex joins his tufted weald,
And on his bourn, but far beyond all ken,
Near hoary Ocean's turbulent domain,
Of ancient fame is † Heathfield's fatal plain;

* Although the Great Charter was ſigned at Runnymede, the previous Conferences of the Barons were chiefly in Surrey.

† The Battle of Haſtings happened at Heathfield, but obtained its name from being fought in the vicinity of the town of Haſtings.

Where

Where Harold, worthy of a better fate,
Of high-determin'd ſoul, too raſhly brave,
Like a bold gameſter flush'd with recent luck,
Stak'd on one venturous throw his capital,
And in an ill-adviſed battle, loſt
His crown, his life, and England's liberty.
Great as the prize for which the hero fought,
His valour prov'd throughout the arduous ſtrife.
Succeſs ſtill follow'd as the warrior led,
Until ſome envious dæmon, foe to worth,
Aim'd at his manly heart the barbed ſteel,
And ſtretch'd the monarch on the blood-drench'd earth.
His faithful followers, faithful e'en in death,
Pil'd o'er their chief huge heaps of ſlaughter'd foes,
And clos'd their leader in a glorious tomb;
The tomb of Liberty, by Valour rais'd.

In varied beauties rich, of hill and vale,

Of ſmoothly winding ſtreams and pleaſant plains,
Southampton * mixes in the gen'ral view;
At once the reſidence of ſmiling peace,
And deadly magazine of furious war.
In ſtores replete, unkindled light'ning dwells,
And hoarded thunder unexploded ſleeps.
Beware ye Gauls, nor tempt the lion's rage
By dark inſidious wiles. Rouſe not to ire
Your gen'rous foe, for fate is in his gripe.
Unwillingly the monarch braves the fight;
But fir'd to wrath, on your whole hoſt he flies,
And horrid carnage marks the victor's way.

The fertile Berrocſire † next claims her right
To ſhare the mingled landſcape of the hill;
Herſelf abounding in what'er can pleaſe,

* The County of Southampton, or Hampſhire.

† Berkſhire is ſuppoſed to have been originally named Berrocſire, from the wood Berroc.

And the fam'd birth-place of a god-like king.
Sent by that mighty pow'r which rules the whole,
To ſave a nation on the brink of fate,
Alfred appear'd; the wiſe, the good, and great.
Hiſtoric truth the faithful mirror holds,
And bids us view him as in fight o'erborne,
A ſingle wand'rer pow'rleſs and diſguis'd.
The juſt reflection ſhews a ſteady chief
Adverſity might wound, tho' not ſubdue.
But cool, collected, mid the battle's rage,
His valour, wiſdom-led, far oft'ner turn'd
The ſcale of conqueſt 'gainſt innumerous foes,
Hewing the way to glorious victory
Thro' all that fate and fury could oppoſe.
He firſt with warlike prows the ocean cleav'd,
And Heav'n inſpir'd, taught Britain's ſons their ſtrength;
Bade them improve their national defence;
Gain fame where Nature, Genius points the way,

And riſe to future empire o'er the waves.
But Nature fram'd him of capacious ſoul;
And when ſhe form'd her Alfred, lent to earth
A guardian angel, cloth'd in mortal ſhape,
To be his people's guide, their king, their friend.
In war a hero, and in peace a ſage;
The legiſlator of his country he,
The Britiſh Solon. Ev'n in this late age,
Great in the annals of judicial fame;
His laws convince the penetrative mind,
That equity and Alfred were the ſame.
Philoſophy and learning dwelt in him;
And like the riſing beams that gild the morn,
Shot their bright influence thro' his darken'd realms,
And night and ignorance before them fled.
Approving Heav'n beheld his matchleſs worth,
And gave not late, the beſt, the immortal crown.

Where

Where the far-diſtant view begins to fade,
Oxonia's ground prolongs th' extenſive ſcene,
From time remote, the ſeat of claſſic lore,
The fount of wiſdom, and the muſes' haunt.
As if inviting them t' entwine freſh wreaths
Here, Victory, that hero's palace * rais'd,
Who conqueſt crown'd where'er he turn'd his arms,
Tore ev'ry laurel from the brow of France.

Adjoining, Buckinghamſhire †, the proſpect aids,
A land of old, for Sylvan ſports renown'd;
Where erſt the jovial hunters ſped the chace,
O'er hill, o'er dale, as fled the fleet-limb'd ſtag,
Till eager hounds the panting victim ſeiz'd,
And ſtretch'd him breathleſs on the verdant turf;

* Blenheim.

† This county is ſaid to derive its name from the Saxon Buc, it formerly abounding in deer.

Then with loud ſhouts the lofty welkin rung,
Re-echoing to the joy-inſpiring horn.

Imagination lend thy potent aid,
Or paint thyſelf the majeſty of Stowe;
Where Art and Nature happy rivals ſtrove;
Happy that neither precedence obtain'd
To mar perfection. Now the throne of taſte
By harmony, proportion, beauty rear'd,
Unequall'd in the eye of judgment ſhines.
The fountain, ſtream, caſcade, and glaſſy lake,
Are all the watry element could yield;
Theſe Nature gave, and with her gifts ſelf-pleas'd,
From Liberty's bold hill *, exulting views
The mingled beauties of the ſcene beneath.
Next, Architecture boaſts his varied excellence,
Points to the obeliſk, the pyramid, the bridge,

* On the ſummit of a hill ſtands a Gothic edifice dedicated to Liberty.

The rough-hewn hermitage and gay pavillion;
The fluted column *, dear to memory,
And laſt rejoicing, o'er a terrace leads,
Of emblematic length, to Friendſhip's ſeat †.
Beneath yon dome ‡ to ancient virtue rais'd,
Thro' ages of increaſing fame preſerv'd,
Reſemblances of men illuſtrious ſtand,
The pride and glory of the human race.
The Theban hero, victor e'en in death;
The rigid founder of the Spartan laws;
The man of men, ſupremely good and wiſe;
And the great bard who rais'd the eternal ſong.

* A column inſcribed by the late Viſcounteſs Cobham, to the memory of her huſband.

† The Temple of Friendſhip, of the Doric Order, ornamented with characteriſtic paintings; containing the buſts of the late Viſcount Cobham and his friends, Frederic Prince of Wales, the Earls of Weſtmoreland, Cheſterfield, Marchmont; and the late Earl of Chatham, Lords Gower, Bathurſt, and Lyttelton.

‡ A rotunda of the Ionic Order, containing the ſtatues of Epaminondas, Lycurgus, Socrates, and Homer.

Could

Could taſte, could juſtice, or remembrance ſweet,
Refuſe to Britiſh worth the tribute due?
Rear'd in the Elyſian fields, the fields of bliſs,
The grateful ſtructure ſtands *. Explore it well;
For never did one fabric yet contain
A group more perfect. Valour, Wiſdom, Wit,
Philoſophy and Learning, Science, Art,
And patriot Virtue, form the glorious whole.
Nor hath the glowing pencil wrought in vain,
Conſulting what the various ſcenes require;
The Genius of the life-pourtraying art,
To each gave ſpirit, character and truth.
Theſe, and ten thouſand nameleſs charms complete
The fair enchanting paradiſe of Stowe.

* The Temple of Britiſh Worthies, filled with the buſts of Pope, Sir Thomas Greſham, Inigo Jones, Milton, Shakeſpeare, Locke, Sir Iſaac Newton, Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, Alfred the Great, Edward the Black Prince, Queen Elizabeth, William the Third, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake, Hampden, and Sir John Bernard.

Nor

Nor ſhall the rural haunts of Hertford paſs unſung,
Where, ever as the joyous ſpring returns,
Soft-breathing Zephyrus directs his flight,
With all the light-wing'd breezes in his train.
Gently they ruſtle thro' the leafy groves,
Skim o'er the dimpled brook, or fan the vale;
While their gay leader ſeeks the rich parterre,
And as the charming goddeſs paints her flowers,
Inceſſant breathes his paſſion, till her cheek
Out-blooms the bluſhing beauties of the roſe.
Thus frolic they, the vernal ſeaſon thro'.

Northward the tow'ring LEITH extends his view
O'er yonder lofty mountains * woody creſt,
Reaching the ſiſter hills † that riſe beyond
Britannia's regal ſeat. Luxuriant ſcene
Of mix'd delights, encompaſſing whate'er

* Box-Hill. † Highgate and Hampſtead.

Can feaſt the mental or corporeal eye.
Glancing from hill to hill, from vale to vale,
The wand'ring fancy dwells at length on thee,
Thou mighty ſeat of commerce, arts, and wealth,
The treaſury of wide-producing earth.
All, Nature yields for luxury or uſe,
All, Art can conquer to embelliſh life;
All, that exalting Science can explore;
All, Learning can collect t' enrich the ſoul,
In thee concentrate, circulate, and charm,
And form thee ſov'reign miſtreſs of the world.
Amid the glut of mental excellence,
Reflecting luſtre, e'en where luſtre reigns;
My verſe ſelects the Muſe * of Fairy-land,
Creator of the realms o'er which he ſway'd;
With whom each virtue wears its proper ſhape,
Each vice its juſt deformity of mien.

* Spenſer.

The

The Genius of Philoſophy * was thine,
To whom great Nature ſhew'd each path obſcure,
Then bade him, light himſelf, enlighten all.
And him, the bold, the lofty Epic bard †,
Sublime, as is the eſſence of his ſong.
In his own temple, fancy bids us ſeek
That ſoul of verſe ‡, whom all the Muſes rear'd;
Fav'rite, indeed, in whom Apollo breath'd
The moſt exalted melody of rhyme,
And taught to warble forth the pureſt ſtrains.

Centium § contributes to the pleaſing ſcene,
Whoſe people brav'd the Norman tyrant's pow'r,
And unſubdued, preſerv'd their ancient rights;
While hapleſs Britain wore the victor's chains.
Far as the ocean's brink, his reign extends,
And from the verge of his tremendous cliff,

* Lord Verulam. † Milton. ‡ Pope. § Kent.

He

He frowns defiance on the Gallic ſhore.
Awful the height depicted by that bard *
Who ſounded Nature's depths, or ſoar'd ſublime,
As Genius bade, or Fancy led the way
Creation thro'; then paſs'd the utmoſt bourn,
Imagin'd worlds, and bodied forms unknown.

Thou too art from the far-commanding LEITH beheld,
Eſſex, whoſe verdant meads, the fatt'ning food
Of lowing herds, embank the ſtately Thames;
On whoſe broad ſurface, floats the various wealth,
Which art, aſſiſted by magnetic pow'r,
Wafts from each clime remote, to Britain's iſle.

The viſual ray prolong'd by optic art,
Includes Severnia † in the diſtant view,
Whoſe central plain ‡ o'er many a mile extends,

* Shakeſpeare. † Wiltſhire. ‡ Saliſbury Plain.

The

The harmleſs empire of the fleecy tribes.
Contemplating awhile the verdant waſte,
Methought the guardian Genius of the land,
Prophetic, deign'd to fill my liſt'ning ear,
With things yet wrapp'd within the womb of Time.
In accents mild, the informing ſpirit thus:
" Yon woolly race, wide ſtraying o'er theſe grounds,
" Shall cede their empire to their ſov'reign, man.
" Rough induſtry ſhall raiſe the houſehold wall,
" Join roof to roof, and ſtretch the length'ning ſtreets,
" 'Till the new city gains a perfect form.
" The approaching traveller ſhall behold its ſpires,
" And ent'ring, mingle with the buſy crowd,
" Or wander mid the cheerful haunts of men,
" Where nought before, ſave lonely ſilence reign'd.
" Surrounding culture ſhall adorn the land,
" And yellow harveſts crown the laughing fields.
" Charm'd with the promis'd happineſs and wealth,

" Deſtin'd to ſpring from waſte and dreary plains,
" Awhile the glorious proſpect ſeem'd to riſe;
" And as I gaz'd enraptur'd o'er the ſcene,
" My ſoul dilating, hail'd the future good.

Thus hath the Muſe deſcrib'd each whole, or part
In reach of human ken, encircling Leith,
Heedleſs of things minute, unworthy note,
Which might deſcription tire, or fancy pall.
What ancient ſtory yields, the verſe hath caught,
And the mind's eye hath pierc'd what ſhuns the ſight.
Here, then would ceaſe the many-featur'd lay,
But lofty themes, as yet remain unſung;
Themes which the all-commanding Leith inſpires;
Who, when the majeſty of day withdraws,
To worlds remote invites the heav'n-read ſoul.

When ſolemn Night enthron'd in higheſt ſtate,

Spreads

Spreads her vaſt canopy o'er half the globe,
Twinkling with radiant gems, to whoſe rich blaze
Golconda's diamonds void of luſtre ſeem;
At the ſtill hour, when ſleep's ſoft pow'r invades,
Oblivious ſtealing o'er each toil-worn ſenſe;
The philoſophic ſage, awaking, ſoars.
On Contemplation's pow'rful wing upborne,
Volition ſwift, he ſeeks the realms above,
Wand'ring the ever-rolling orbs among
Effulgencies immenſe. From the wrapt ſoul
O'er-flowing with delight, impaſſion'd burſts
The involuntary ſtrain,—the ſong of praiſe.
All hail! ye ſacred ever beaming fires
That gild with glorious light the vault of Heav'n;
Fix'd by the eternal architect, ye ſhine
Each one a ſun, far-ſunder'd and remote;
So wills the pow'r ſupreme, in all things wiſe,
Leſt darting fierce inſufferable heat,

Beyond

Beyond what mortal bodies may endure,
We periſh in the ten-fold blaze of noon,
And worlds on worlds in flames celeſtial melt.
With you the changeful radiance lights the ſkies,
In creſcent form, or ſhining out full orb'd,
Gladdens the ſilent hour. Then Nature ſmiles,
And Night in all her pomp of glory reigns.
The hour of ſilent meditation this,
And high reſearch, befitting wiſeſt minds,
On things ſublime intent, magnificence
Supreme, immenſe; the fiat of a God.
Aſtronomy with ſapient eye ſurveys
The ſtellar map, and traces ev'ry ſphere
That nightly luminates the arch of Heav'n.
'Twas thine, immortal Newton, firſt to ſcan
The laws ſublime that rule the wheeling orbs,
Each planet guiding thro' elliptic paths,
Around the central ſource of light and heat.

Superior

Superior as thy ſcience, is thy fame.
With mind intent, and optic pow'rs improv'd,
Thou, Herſchell, trac'd anew the brilliant ſcene,
And mid ſurrounding luſtre found a gem *
Unknown. Nor this alone to thee we owe:
Thou, from th' abſtracted heights of ſcience brought
Inſtruction down; an eaſy faithful guide.

Yet one more tribute to departed worth.
'Tis thine who ſmil'd on death; thine, Hull †,
Who gaily bade prepare thy lateſt pillow,
Ev'n here on LEITH; thy fav'rite haunt in life,

In

* Dr. Herſchell diſcovered the Georgium Sidus.

† Mr. Hull was a native of Briſtol, and ſerved in the Iriſh Parliament with unblemiſhed reputation. In the decline of life he purchaſed Leith Hill Place, at which he reſided. Some years before his death, he cauſed a ſquare tower to be erected on the moſt elevated part of Leith Hill, in which, agreeable to his requeſt, his remains are depoſited. In the earlier part of his life he lived in intimacy with Pope, Biſhop Berkley, and other celebrated characters; and it may be obſerved, that his memory fully merits the encomium we have beſtowed.

In death thy tomb. Reſpected be thy name,
For thou wert all ſociety demands
Of man; wiſe, virtuous, accompliſh'd, good.
Hear all ye pow'rs that raiſe the heaven-taught lay;
My invocation hear, ye forms unſeen;
Ye ſacred Genii of the mountain, hear;
Aid me with numbers equal to my theme,
Pour all your fire collected thro' my verſe,
And with impreſſive ardor cloſe my ſong.

Over the entrance of the Tower, is the following Inſcription:

Ut Terram Undique Beatam
Videas Viator
Hæc Turris De Longe Spectabilis
Sumptibus Richardi Hull,
Ex Agro Leith-Hill Place, Armri
Regnante Georgio Tertio.
Anno Domini, MDCCLXVI.
Extructa Fuit
Oblecta Mento Non Sui Solum,
Sed Vicinorum
Et Omnium.

The

The orb of day, declining in the weſt,
Gave ſign around of ſwift retiring light.
Mild ſoft'ning beams illum'd the red'ning ſkies,
Gleam'd o'er the diſtant hills and ivied tow'rs,
And edg'd the foreſt tops with mellower hues.
The vallies ſunk into a deeper ſhade,
And the rough mountain roſe yet more embrown'd.
Unſhook the lightly quiv'ring aſpen hung,
And calmneſs waited the approach of Night.
She came, and o'er the ſcene her mantle flung,
That mantle of impenetrable woof,
Which wraps in darkneſs Nature's brighteſt robes,
And blots diſtinction from the face of things.
Nature ſeem'd burden'd with oppreſſive gloom,
And ſilent horror trembled in the ſhade.
From the ſtill boſom of the lonely glen,
Deep hollow ſounds burſt on the wond'ring ear,
And o'er the wild heath ruſh'd the ſudden gale.

Forms, that ſeem'd once inhabitants of earth,
Again embodied, ſtalk'd athwart the ground;
And riſing awful to the aſtoniſh'd ſight,
A warlike phantom trod the mountain brow.
Æthereal arms the martial ſpectre wore,
That pour'd an inſtantaneous blaze around,
And thro' the gloom of night impell'd new day.
His venerable viſage, ſcar intrench'd,
Mark'd the rude ſhock of battle often try'd,
And hardy valour-hood in tented fields.
In his keen eye that glanc'd unuſual fires,
The ſage, the patriot, and the hero ſhone.
Full in the center of the beamy ſhield,
Advanc'd before the warrior's ample cheſt,
The ſacred name of LIBERTY, appear'd;
THE FIRST AND UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF MAN.
With more than human dignity of mien,

And voice that pierc'd ev'n to the inmoſt heart,
The viſion thus the awful ſilence broke.

" While thou ſurvey'ſt th' enchanting ſcene around,
" O'er which creative induſtry hath thrown
" Whate'er can gratify thy wand'ring eye,
" Bethink, O! mortal, whoſe the mighty gift,
" And what the vaſt, th' ineſtimable price.
" Toil, ſweat, and blood, thy great forefathers paid,
" And thine the plenteous harveſt of the field.
" Where now thou ſeeſt the full-ear'd golden grain,
" The verdant paſture, and the ſtately wood,
" Uncertain ſcatter'd crops but thinly ſprang
" Amid the barren, drear, and joyleſs waſte,
" Or roſe beſide the foreſt's gloomy ſhade.
" The heartleſs peaſant * turn'd the ſtubborn glebe,
" Himſelf far heavier than his oxen yok'd,

* The ſtate of villeinage.

" Thro' life ſubjected to tyrannic pow'r.
" The ſun that gladden'd the fair face of morn,
" Smil'd on the day, and bade mankind rejoice;
" But lighted him to bitter ſervile taſks,
" And ſaw him barter'd like his fellow-beaſts.
" Yet more, to agonize his wounded breaſt,
" Sharp Miſery empoiſon'd ev'ry ſhaft,
" And keen Reflection urg'd the weapons home;
" His hapleſs wife, his children, all were ſlaves.
" Hope, the great ſoother of the human mind,
" Too oft at diſtance ſeen, or ſeen too late,
" Hope never ſmooth'd the wretch's flinty path.
" One mournful wiſh his ſecret boſom fill'd,
" That Fate might haſten the death-dealing blow,
" And cruſh a willing victim to the earth.
" Such was the ſervile ſtate of Britain's ſons,
" Enſlav'd and captiv'd in their native land;
" Debas'd and levell'd with the beſtial herd.

" Sunk

" Sunk as they were, moſt abject and forlorn,
" A latent ſelf-informing thought reviv'd;
" Suggeſting Nature's hand had ſtamp'd them men,
" And gave them Freedom when ſhe gave them birth.
" The expanding flame of Liberty burſt forth,
" Glow'd in the ſenate, blaz'd thro'out the field.
" Who fought, who conquer'd, and who fell, thou know'ſt.
" Enſlaving Deſpotiſm expiring lay,
" And proud Oppreſſion welter'd in his blood;
" There ceas'd the deſolating ſtorm of war.
" The ruthleſs falchion bath'd in native gore,
" Satiate of ſlaughter, fought its peaceful ſheath.
" Then Liberty, with ſtep impartial, rov'd,
" Health, Innocence, and Pleaſure in her train,
" And dwelt alike in palace and in cot.
" Sweet as the morn with early bluſhes ſpread,
" She led the whiſtling plough-man to his taſk;
" Invited Plenty to his homely meal,

How

" And cheer'd him thro' the labours of the day.
" How vaſt the change theſe fertile lands declare,
" And thine own eyes atteſt the ſmiling truth.
" Yet, let not theſe, the glorious proſpect bound,
" The mental view be thine, embrace the whole;
" Behold Britannia, happy, great, and free.
" Thus pow'rful, to meridian ſplendor rais'd,
" O! never may her ſun of glory ſet!"

Embolden'd now, I had adventur'd ſpeech,
When lo! the martial form diſſolv'd in air;
The glowing beauties of the landſcape fled,
And ſudden night involv'd the mountain brow.

11 : 7 : 19

FINIS.